CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method of managing event schedules, the method comprising the computer implemented steps of:

receiving a plurality of acceptance messages associated with a first scheduled event having a scheduled event time, each of the plurality of acceptance messages associated with a respective user;

identifying a schedule conflict of a user associated with an acceptance message of the plurality of acceptance messages; and

responsive to identifying the schedule conflict, calculating a probable attendance from the plurality of acceptance messages.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of identifying further comprises:

accessing a schedule store of a data processing system that generated the acceptance message; and

reading a number of events from the schedule store that have respective schedule times that overlap with the scheduled event time.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of calculating further comprises:

determining a weighted factor for weighting an attendance count of the user associated with the acceptance message.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of calculating further comprises:

incrementing an attendance counter by one for each acceptance message of the plurality of acceptance messages that does not have an identified schedule conflict.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of calculating further comprises:

incrementing the attendance counter by an amount less than unity for the acceptance message.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the amount is calculated as the quotient of one and a number of events that have a respective scheduled time that overlaps with the scheduled event time of the first scheduled event.

7. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for managing event schedules, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving a plurality of invitation acceptance messages of a scheduled event from a plurality of clients;

second instructions for interrogating a respective calendar of each of the plurality of clients; and

third instructions that calculate a respective probability value of attendance for each of the plurality of clients, wherein at least one probability value is weighted for an identified schedule conflict of a client of the plurality of clients.

8. The computer program product of claim 7, wherein the second instructions read a number of event schedules that conflict with the scheduled event.

9. The computer program product of claim 7, wherein the probability value is scaled down in proportion to a number of schedule conflicts.

10. The computer program product of claim 7, wherein the probability value is calculated as a quotient of one and a number of schedule conflicts.

11. The computer program product of claim 7, further comprising:

fourth instructions that calculate an estimated attendance of the scheduled event.

12. The computer program product of claim 11, wherein the estimated attendance is a sum of each probability value of the respective plurality of clients.

13. The computer program product of claim 7, further comprising:

fourth instructions that display a user of each client and the respective probability value in a user interface.

14. The computer program product of claim 7, wherein the second instructions periodically interrogate the respective calendar of each of the clients.

15. A data processing system for managing an electronic calendar system, comprising:

a memory that contains a electronic calendar system as a set of instructions;

a network adapter that receives a plurality of acceptance messages; and

a processing unit, responsive to execution of the set of instructions, that calculates a respective probability value associated with each of the plurality of acceptance messages and weights a probability value of an associated acceptance message responsive to identification of at least one scheduling conflict.

16. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the processing unit generates a list of users each associated with one of the plurality of acceptance messages.

17. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the list includes each respective probability value.

18. The data processing system of claim 17, further comprising:

a display device, wherein the list is graphically output on the display device.

19. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the processing unit calculates an estimated attendance as a sum of each probability value.

20. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the weight of the probability value is inversely proportional to a number of a plurality of scheduling conflicts.

21. A method of managing event schedules, the method comprising the computer implemented steps of:

receiving a plurality of acceptance messages associated with a first scheduled event having a scheduled event time, each of the plurality of acceptance messages associated with a respective user;

identifying a schedule conflict of a user associated with an acceptance message of the plurality of acceptance messages; and

responsive to identifying the schedule conflict, calculating a meeting status value that provides an indication of the likelihood the first scheduled event will be held.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the meeting status value is calculated as a quotient of a sum of a number of users that have issued an acceptance message of the plurality of acceptance messages and a number of identified schedule conflicts.

23. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

graphically outputting the meeting status on a display device, wherein the meeting status value is visually represented as a color of a plurality of colors each corresponding to a range of possible meeting status values.

24. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

conveying the meeting status value to at least one user associated with one of the plurality of acceptance messages.